

HONOLULU, HAWAII TERRITORY, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1909.

## PEARL HARBOR--KEY TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Nothing of a national import has occurred during many years past concerning which there has been such general approval as the decision of the government to make of Pearl Harbor a great naval base, "the key to the Pacific." The announcement of the final decision of the President to recommend a withdrawal from Olongapo and an increase of activity at Pearl Harbor has been commented on by every influential newspaper of America, and in practically every instance the Pearl Harbor policy has been endorsed. Herewith are given extracts from mainland newspapers, published "from Maine to the Golden Gate," not one of which criticized adversely the policy announced by the administration that is to mean so much to Honolulu in particular and Hawaii in general.

It is noticeable, however, that the majority of the editorial writers take for granted the assumption that Pearl Harbor became available for the United States when the treaty of annexation between Hawaii and the United States went into effect. Of course, this is an error, although a natural one. There are others who are under the impression that Pearl Harbor was ceded to the United States as a coaling station when the first reciprocity treaty was signed. This is also an error, an error shared by many in Hawaii.

## The Grant Treaty.

The first treaty of reciprocity was negotiated in 1876, between Secretary Fish, under President Grant, and E. H. Allen, chancellor of the kingdom, representing the government of Hawaii. In this treaty the United States was granted no special privileges in Pearl Harbor, although the Hawaiian government agreed that it "will not lease or otherwise dispose of or create any lien upon any port, harbor or other territory \* \* \* or grant any special privilege or right of use therein to any other government."

## The Cleveland Renewal.

In 1887 the treaty was renewed for seven years by President Cleveland, and it was during the negotiations leading up to this renewal that the cession of Pearl Harbor figured as a condition. In the local assembly, the question of handing Pearl Harbor over to America was a tender one with many, and the ministers of the crown were kept busy during the session of 1886 in denying any intention on their part to hand over any part of the realm.

The first definite information as to the new clause in the treaty came to Honolulu, naturally, in the columns of The Advertiser. This paper published the text of the treaty in full before the ministry deemed it wise to announce it, and there was a shaking up in consequence.

Minister Gibson promptly denied the truth of The Advertiser story, branding it as a falsehood and the names attached to the published treaty as forgeries. The Advertiser simply waited for time to prove it right, something it had done before and has done since.

The Hawaiian Hansard for Saturday, May 15, 1886, contains the following in reference to the treaty and Pearl Harbor:

## Knew Too Much Even Then.

"Minister Gibson rose to make a statement which would be in accordance with the purport of the resolution before the assembly on a former day, and the statement he would make had a particular reference to a treaty alleged to have been prepared at Washington, one of the provisions of which involved a cession of Pearl Harbor to the United States. The draft of treaty published in the supplement to the P. C. Advertiser this morning, His Excellency stated emphatically is a pure invention, a falsehood. The names of E. T. Frelinghuysen and H. A. P. Carter appended to it, His Excellency has also stated to be a forgery. The original draft of the treaty convention sent to the senate for ratification was held up in the house with the remark that no clause for the cession of Pearl Harbor exists in it, and also that the new treaty is a continuation of the old without modification. His Excellency went on to read despatches of March 18 and April 27, from Hon. Mr. Carter at Washington, with a telegram of May 7. The telegram reads: 'Bayard authorizes me to say that alleged amendments to treaty in the senate wholly without knowledge or concurrence by him. Trust no notice will be taken in Honolulu. Think treaty can be maintained intact with care and prudence.' 'On a motion of Rep. Richardson

that the information just given by the Minister be printed and circulated throughout the Kingdom, a long discussion ensued, in which the mover, Messrs. Paehaole, Kaunamama, Thurston, Baker, Palohau, Mahala and Castle took part.

"Rep. Castle moved that the reporters have access to the documents if they wished to use them. Carried."

## Report Would Not Down.

There were those in those days who had faith in The Advertiser, however, and in spite of Gibson's vigorous denials, the matter of Pearl Harbor persisted in coming up. This led to another denial in the assembly, on Tuesday, June 15, of the same year. Of this, the Hansard says:

## Really, Nothing in It.

"Rep. Kaulukou presented a resolution as follows: Whereas, There are

fresh reports current that the Government of the United States is endeavoring to negotiate a new treaty with the Hawaiian Government on the basis of the cession of Pearl Harbor to the former government and that it is being kept secret, therefore resolved, that the minister of foreign affairs state to this assembly whether these reports be true or not. He mentioned rumors of definite information from Washington having been shown to various prominent residents and said it was the duty of nobles and representatives to jealously guard the independence of the kingdom as recognized by Great Britain, France and the United States. If they could not retain the treaty without the cession of Pearl Harbor they had better do without the treaty. Once it came to the notice of Germany, England and France that the United States was seeking this advantage, these

Powers would interfere to stop it and this kingdom might become involved in serious complications.

"Rep. Kalua reverted to a similar resolution sometime ago answered satisfactorily by the minister of foreign affairs and held that the ministry having the confidence of the legislature should be entrusted with the care of the kingdom's independence. He therefore moved that the resolution be indefinitely postponed.

"The resolution passed.

"Minister Gibson said he would state all he knew as to the foundation there was for the rumors referred to. There was no further official information from His Majesty's Envoy at Washington in reference to the treaty negotiations since the speaker's answer to a previous resolution of the assembly. But he had this to say in addition, that His Majesty's Envoy, repeating his for-

mer statement that the administration at Washington, President Cleveland, Secretary Bayard and other members of the cabinet are uniform in their expression that they desire no amendment to the old treaty. That they do not propose any new negotiation, any further concession on the part of Hawaii in order to obtain a new treaty. The Washington government are in favor of a new treaty without further concessions. But he must state in the way of replying fully to the resolution that whilst there are no further information from the government there was from His Majesty's Envoy that in consequence of pressure from here there was a great deal of discussion amongst senators and the senate is the body that has most to do with the passage of treaties. There was a proposition from the senate that there should be a special concession, namely, the cession of

Pearl Harbor, which he could assure the assembly the government at Washington was not in favor of and which His Majesty's Envoy had been instructed to state that this government would not entertain for a moment. There had been further discussion about limited possession of Pearl Harbor, such as by lease, but His Majesty's Envoy had been instructed, and further instructions to the same effect were going by today's mail, that whilst the Hawaiian Government recognizes the United States as our nearest neighbor and one of our best friends and expresses its desire to maintain intact the present cordial relations between the two governments, yet His Majesty's Envoy was instructed to say that to accommodate this great neighbor and friend we could not concede to her more than we could to any other great Power and would not consent to her receiving any special privilege in Pearl Harbor or any other harbor of the kingdom except as a general privilege to be shared by other Powers as well. He begged to say that he knew nothing of any private correspondence except this and there was a pressure of opinion going from here to determine opinion in Washington, but he would state that from his own point of view there was nothing whatever to apprehend with regard to the Government of the United States. There came from that government continued assurances of cordial and friendly regard and of a determination to continue friendly relations with this kingdom. Such was the assurance from his secretary of state that the government desired no trammel to be imposed on this kingdom. Whatever opinions there might be here or at Washington there was no occasion for the anxiety that had been created in Europe by reports of new negotiations. There was no ground for apprehension and the United States continued to be friendly."

**The Advertiser Vindicated.**

Then, in November, 1887, came the signing of the treaty renewal, which contained the Pearl Harbor clause exactly as it had been printed in The Advertiser over a year previously. This treaty gave the United States:

"\* \* \* The exclusive right to enter the harbor of Pearl River, in the Island of Oahu, and to establish and maintain there a coaling and repair station for the use of vessels of the United States, and to that end the United States may improve the entrance of said harbor and do all things needful to the purpose aforesaid."

## Long Delayed, But Coming.

Since the signing of this treaty, Pearl Harbor has been the subject of numerous reports, recommendations, suggestions and ideas by official after official. The value of the harbor has never been denied, but the work of actually making it of use was delayed through year after year. That delay has now come to an end. Pearl Harbor is about to be what the prophetic pen of a British naval officer announced over a hundred years ago it would be "the great naval base of the Pacific ocean."

## Secretary of War's Report.

What this will mean is given best in the latest report made upon the subject, that of the secretary of war for the year 1909, which says:

"The completion of fortification projects of the Philippines, Honolulu, and Pearl Harbor, the strategic value of which exceeds that of other localities in the insular possessions, will require an additional expenditure of only \$4,985,334. Estimates for \$3,635,546 have been submitted to congress for appropriations to complete the most urgent part of this work, and it is earnestly hoped that the necessary appropriations will be made at the coming session of congress.

"In previous reports of the department the necessity has been pointed out for having troops of the mobile army as 'coast artillery supports'; that is, to defend the rear of the forts from attack by the enemy which may be landed from hostile ships for the purpose of making such attack while the ships are engaging the forts in front. The need for troops for this purpose is most pressing for the successful defense of the Island of Oahu, Hawaii. The construction of a naval base there are estimated to involve an ultimate expenditure of about \$13,000,000. Congress has already appropriated \$3,000,000 for fortification work here, nearly all of which has been expended, and while these fortifications will be sufficient to protect the naval base and Honolulu from purely naval attacks, they are particularly vulnerable to attack from the rear. It is absolutely necessary that a large permanent garrison should be maintained in the Island to furnish regular troops which in addition to the militia of Oahu, will be required as supports for the fortifications. The chief of coast artillery considers the need of increasing the mobile army for this purpose 'so urgent as to make it the most pressing military necessity now confronting the United States.'

"It has been demonstrated by our experience in the construction of sea-coast fortifications in the United States that provision for sheltering the troops that are to man the guns should proceed hand in hand with the construction of the defenses."

**Guards Pacific Peace.**

Cincinnati Enquirer—"The selection of Pearl Harbor as our principal naval base in the Pacific is a wise one, and President Taft's action will be approved by not only the military and naval experts, but by the entire population of the United States.

This location gives our fleets in the Pacific the same advantage of position as is enjoyed by Great Britain at Malta as far as the Mediterranean Sea is concerned.

But it is a safer base than is Malta by reason of its greater distance from the base of operations of the navy of any foreign nation.

France could strike at Malta from Toulon, Italy from Venice, Austria from Trieste, or all three combined could, if engaged in hostilities with England, mass their fleets before Malta within 48 hours after opening of hostilities.

Not so with Pearl Harbor. Hostile fleets from no foreign base of operations could reach it in less than a week or ten days, and a siege or blockade for any length of time would be an impossibility so far from supplies and repairs.

The American people want the work well done, thoroughly done and completely done, cost what it may, and they expect it done as speedily as it can be done in the very best possible manner.

## Magnificent Rendezvous.

Rochester Chronicle—"Pearl Harbor, in the mid-Pacific, may be made easily a magnificent rendezvous for the American navy in that ocean. \* \* \* At last, whatever becomes of the Philippines scheme, it has been decided to establish a great naval base at Pearl Harbor and to fortify it that it will be practically impregnable. The wisdom of this decision becomes clearer the more one studies the situation in the Pacific. \* \* \* Hawaii is so situated, in the Pacific that it is the natural center for converging transoceanic lines, whether from the Isthmian ship canal or American ports on the Pacific. By the possession of a great fortress in those islands and a powerful naval force on that ocean, this country will practically command the Pacific against any Asiatic power."

**An Impregnable Stronghold.**

Philadelphia Inquirer—"It is small wonder, then, that after long discussion of this subject the joint army and navy board recommended that Pearl Harbor be made as nearly as possible an impregnable stronghold. There will be a small naval repair station at Subic Bay, in the Philippines, and the work of fortifying Corregidor Island will be completed by the army, but the Hawaiian base will be the strategic center of our Pacific naval defense."

## ALL AMERICA EXPRESSES APPROVAL

## Worth Many Dreadnoughts.

New York Times—By bringing the Pacific naval base back to the Hawaiian Islands the efficiency of the fleet in case of sudden war is further increased so far as the protection of that base is concerned by the fact that Pearl Harbor can be reached from Panama in eight days' sailing, while it would take the fleet twenty-eight days at best to get to Subic Bay. That is a difference that might settle the result of a war and the destiny of a nation.

The President considers the Panama Canal as the key to our supremacy in the Pacific, and with a naval base at Pearl Harbor the power of that fleet in the matter of coaling facility, steaming radius, equipment, ordnance, and military integrity in either defensive or offensive operation practically doubled. Thus if the canal multiplies our naval strength by two the selection of Pearl Harbor as the naval base has again multiplied the power of the fleet. In that view of it the stroke of the pen that concentrates expenditure and work at that point is the equivalent of many dreadnoughts and thousands of men. It makes us the leading naval power in the world so far as the Pacific goes.

The vulnerable feature of the proposed base appears to the rear on the northern side of the island of Oahu. Here is a long stretch of sloping country, where a landing would be attempted. On the northeastern side of the island is a range of mountains 3000 feet high; on the southwestern side is another range 4000 feet high. There are few passes in these ranges and they could be held with field artillery against great odds. The point of attack would be the stretch of seashore to the northwest about 20 miles wide from Kaena Point. The water runs out at a very gradual increase of depth and presents a very favorable opportunity for attack.

It would take a mobile army to defend the place, in war, at least 40,000 men. Even in peace, to provide against emergency, there should be quarters and equipment for ten or twelve thousand men there. The island railroad runs down the valley to the central point of the shore, and makes it possible to supply an army there in excellent manner.

Probably the plan that will be decided on for the defense of this region will be to place at intervals along the shore mortar batteries that could stand off a naval attack. Twelve-inch mortars firing high explosive projectiles and siege guns throwing the new shrapnel would make it no place for discreet sailormen or foot soldiery intent on landing.

## None Too Soon.

Brooklyn Eagle—"The fortification of Pearl Harbor and its equipment with adequate docking facilities are undertaken none too soon. No human prescience can tell what the future may hold in store for us in the farther Pacific. We hope for peace, but we cannot close our eyes to the possibility of war. Should the latter unhappily disturb the good relations now existing between ourselves and all of the other nations sharing in the commerce of the Pacific, the knowledge that the Navy has an impregnable stronghold in Hawaii will have a reassuring effect on the public mind.

## Commends Itself to Common Sense.

Boston Post—"The choice of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as the naval base of the United States in the Pacific commends itself to the common sense of civilians as a desirable compromise between the army and navy members of the board which decides such matters. It is surely preferable to any location in the Philippines because more surely commanding the ocean in all directions, and it has superior advantages in depth of water and opportunity for the construction of docks for the repair of war vessels which will be also available for the largest commercial craft. It will add to the equipment of the United States for the enterprises of peace as well as the necessities of war.

## Pearl Harbor and Philippines.

Providence Tribune—"The decision which has just been reached that Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands shall be the main strategic base between the Pacific Coast of the United States and the Pacific Coast of Asia seems to be occasioning considerable rejoicing among

the anti-imperialists. They have been assured, they declare, that the principal reason for holding on to the Philippines was to furnish this country with a naval and military base in the Orient, and now it appears that all that talk was humbug.

That may be perfectly true, and if any such plea has been made by the government, which is the only responsible party, it certainly was humbug; there was no necessity for it, if it can be said that there is ever necessity for humbug. Of any rate, the main reason for holding on to the archipelago in question has always been that there was no honorable way of letting go of it.

## Nothing Personal.

Chicago Daily News—"Pearl Harbor, Hawaiian Islands, is to be decorated with fourteen-inch guns and similar ornaments. If the natives of Tahiti or Rarotonga choose to see anything personal in this they are, of course, at liberty to do so.

## A Natural Outpost.

Cleveland Plain Dealer—"One has but to glance at a map to understand the advantages of Pearl Harbor as a naval base in case of war. It is located as a natural outpost. From its strong position a fleet could dash in any direction on its mission of destruction. Now that it has been decided to fortify the Panama Canal, Pearl Harbor is well located to guard its Pacific approach."

## Pacific Fleet's Haven.

Omaha Daily Bee—"Maintenance of Olongapo as a Philippine repair station and development of a great naval base at Pearl Harbor should enable us to look after our interests in the Pacific to the best possible advantage, and

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Congress may be depended on to take the necessary steps to make Pearl Harbor the haven of the Pacific fleet."

## Protection for Billions.

Washington Star—"The interests dependent upon the maintenance of an effective outpost are too vast for so-called economy to play a part in the preparation. The expenditure at Pearl Harbor of millions will be an insurance guarantee for the protection of billions in national values.

## Most Fortunately Situated.

Brooklyn Standard Union—"The Hawaiian Islands are most fortunately situated for strategic purposes. They are the only important group within two thousand miles of the canal on the Pacific side, and are nearly midway between the United States and the Philippines. Completely isolated from all foreign naval bases, they give the United States a peculiarly strong position from which to operate in the Pacific. With Pearl Harbor equipped as planned, the warships could be mobilized there and strike the enemy without undergoing the necessity of an extremely long cruise.

It is an outpost which not only will be of great value in defending our eastern possessions, but which will enable this country to keep the ships of an enemy at a respectable distance from the Pacific Coast and the Panama Canal. The Philippines could care for themselves until the Atlantic and Pacific fleets combined at Pearl Harbor and sailed to settle the contest one way or another. The importance of fortifying a suitable harbor in the Philippines has not been lost sight of, but of the two the Hawaiian base is far more urgent.

## Would Spare No Expense.

New York Sun—"Sharply as army

and navy men may disagree about the best method of defending the Philippines, they concur in the view that Pearl Harbor is invaluable as the site of a naval base in the Pacific. \* \* \* The manifest duty of congress is to spare no expense in making Pearl Harbor the impregnable naval base that the destiny of the United States requires it to be."

## Key to the Pacific.

Philadelphia Record—"The establishment of a great naval base at Pearl Harbor would be in line with a wise policy of concentration for defense. The Hawaiian group may with good right be called the 'Key of the Pacific.' Instead of being seven thousand miles from our coast, as is the Philippine archipelago, the Hawaiian group is but one thousand miles away. A strong fleet stationed there would make an overseas attack on any part of the American coast from Unalaska down to Panama too dangerous to be attempted."

## Spare No Cost.

Washington Star—"The President's decision has finally been rendered in favor of the more central position, on the ground that from the Hawaiian base the navy can be maintained for purposes of mainland defense as well as insular protection. This conclusion having fully been reached it should be the policy of the government to proceed vigorously with the development of Pearl Harbor as the most perfectly equipped and securely fortified naval base in the world. Half way measures are futile and costly."

## Not the Only Base Needed.

Baltimore American—"It is most

unfortunate that the country does not maintain a fleet in the Pacific waters adequate to any occasion that may arise. The creating of a great base at that point may be looked upon as presaging the full recognition of the naval needs of the Pacific, and that in the course of the next few years that body of water will have permanently located upon it a fleet as large as the one that passed through the Pacific on its world tour."

## Its Strategic Value.

Pittsburg Dispatch—"It has been argued that in case of war instead of being of value to this country our 'Philippine outpost' in the Pacific would really be a weakness. This view appears to have been accepted at last by the military experts who were so anxious to spend millions there on defensive works. On the other hand, a strong naval base at Pearl Harbor will be of immense strategic value both in the defense of the Pacific coast and the Philippines themselves."

## Guard Pacific's Peace.

Cincinnati Enquirer—"The selection of Pearl Harbor as our principal naval base in the Pacific is a wise one, and President Taft's action will be approved by not only the military and naval experts but by the entire population of the United States. \* \* \* The American republic prepares for war, but only to defend her interests and her rights."

## Position Is Unique.

Portland Oregonian—"It is fortunate for the United States that we have in the Hawaiian Islands an advantageous position for a naval outpost in the Pacific. Are we to retain the Philippines?

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